

Carole Young-Kleinfeld  
*Registrar of Voters*  
Telephone (203) 563-0111



Elections Department  
Wilton Town Hall  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

March 3, 2017

**Testimony in SUPPORT of the following:**

**HJ0005--Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow Early Voting.**

**HJ00013 –Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Permit Early Voting.**

**HJ00016 –Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Permit No-Excuse Absentee Voting.**

**HJ00036 –Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution Providing For No-Excuse Absentee Voting.**

**HJ00095--Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment To Permit Early And Regional Voting**

**HJ00096--Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment To Expand The Use Of Absentee Ballots**

**SB 897 –An Act Concerning Eligibility for Electors to Vote by Absentee Ballot.**

Greetings, Representative Fox, Senators McLachlan and Winfield, and GAE Committee Members,

As the registrar of voters for the Town of Wilton, I wish to express my support for the above bills.

Early voting permits registered voters to cast their ballots before Election Day. No excuse absentee early voting allows voters to cast absentee ballots before Election Day with no requirement to provide excuses or reasons for their absence on Election Day. As a registrar of voters for the Town of Wilton, a town with many NYC commuters, I support these common sense, pro-voter measures as well as thoughtful and efficient ways to implement them.

**Voters request early voting.** One of the most frequent questions our office received before Election Day this past November was “When and where is early voting for the Presidential Election?” Many newcomers to our town are incredulous that a forward-thinking state like Connecticut still restricts access to voting before Election Day. Unlike other states, Connecticut prohibits in-person early voting and absentee voting except in limited circumstances. When commuters fail to predict traffic or railroad delays accurately or when workers risk being late to work because of waiting lines at the polls, these prohibitions cause stress, inconvenience, and even disenfranchisement.

The Brennan Center for Justice's 2013 report *Early Voting: What Works* outlines the benefits of early in person voting: less stress on the system on Election Day, shorter voting lines on Election Day, improved poll worker performance, prevention/correction of errors, greater access to voting, and increased voter satisfaction.

**Connecticut should make it easier—not harder—for people to participate.**

Connecticut is in the minority for early voting. The National Association of State Legislatures states that 37 states allow early voting, including 3 that permit mail-in voting. No excuses are needed to cast an absentee ballot in 27 states; only 20 states—including Connecticut—still require an excuse. Connecticut should be a leader in providing these pro-voter options—options that make it easier for citizens to participate in their democracy.

Please support early voting and no-excuse absentee voting. I'm certain that many registrars and town clerks would be willing to work on the logistics of implementing such measures.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Carole Young Kleinfeld, Registrar, Wilton CT